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# Fulbright: Dissenter

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WASHINGTON, Oct. 30—Senator J. W. Fulbright, chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, went home to Arkansas early this week. His home town of Fayetteville is only a short air hop from Austin. But the betting here was that L. B. J. would not be picking up the phone and saying: "Bill, why don't you and Betty just run down to the ranch for a breakfast of deer meat sausage?"

It's no secret that President Johnson is not feeling very kindly towards Bill Fulbright these days. First there was that speech in the Senate on Sept. 15 in which the Senator, after closely examining all the cables and intelligence reports on the Dominican crisis last April, said that the United States had intervened because of an exaggerated fear of a Communist take-over and not, as it first said, to save American lives; that the President's policy was "marred by a lack of candor and misinformation;" that the Administration had "turned its back on social revolution in Santo Domingo and associated itself with a corrupt and reactionary military oligarchy" to the detriment of our influence in Latin America and the advantage of the Communists.

Then last Sunday on "Meet the Press," the Senator urged once again that the bombing of North Vietnam be suspended for what he called "a more reasonable length of time" than the five-day suspension last May to see whether the North Vietnamese would finally respond to the President's offer of negotiations. He also suggested that the Defense Department, with the acquiescence of Secretary of State Dean Rusk, was unduly influential in political policy-making.

The next day in Austin, Bill D. Moyers, the White House Press Secretary, curtly rebuffed both these suggestions. "We have had no indication," he said, "that another cessation of the military strikes at military targets in the north would change anyone's mind anywhere else." As for Pentagon influence, he said the President made foreign policy and Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara is "much less of a militarist than some."

## Advise Is Duty

In the "Meet the Press" program last Sunday, the Senator succinctly put his finger on the difficulties between him and the President when he said:

"I think it is the function under our system for a Senator to give advice as well as consent to the conduct of foreign relations. . . . It certainly wasn't because of this Administration that I spoke on the Dominican situation."

That last is true enough. Mr. Fulbright has tried to advise other Presidents. And much of the advice was, like Robert Frost's road, "not taken."

For example, in a long memo of March 29, 1961, he urged President Kennedy to "tolerate" the Castro regime and try to "isolate it," rather than overthrow it.

"Cuba," he wrote, "is no longer important to the United States for its own sake, but only for its effect on our Hemisphere position. Whether we like it or not, we are engaged in a kind of competitive co-existence with Castro to see whose system can produce reform and progress more quickly."

When President Kennedy, after the Bay of Pigs catastrophe, was asked at a news conference about the Senator's opposition to the invasion policy, he said he felt that Mr. Fulbright was "a valuable citizen and I think his counsel is useful and I think he should say what he thinks."

Has this counsel always been without effect on policy? Has he been without sufficient influence in the Senate to compel the President's attention?

Not always. According to some Senators and Administration of-

know, Mr. Fulbright's quiet arguments were an element in President Johnson's decision to propose "unconditional discussions" on a Vietnam settlement in his Johns Hopkins speech, in his request to Congress for additional economic aid for South Vietnam and in his promise to ask Congress for a billion dollar contribution to the Mekong River development.

## Prime Mover

And he was the prime mover in assembling a group of influential Senators from both parties—who must be nameless—who are credited with re-enforcing the President's growing resistance to those who advocated a call-up of reserve and national guard units last summer.

Nevertheless it must be admitted that his advice—as, for example, on Cuban policy—has more effect after the event than on it. And so it almost certainly will be with policy on the Dominican Republic and Vietnam—it, indeed, it has any

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